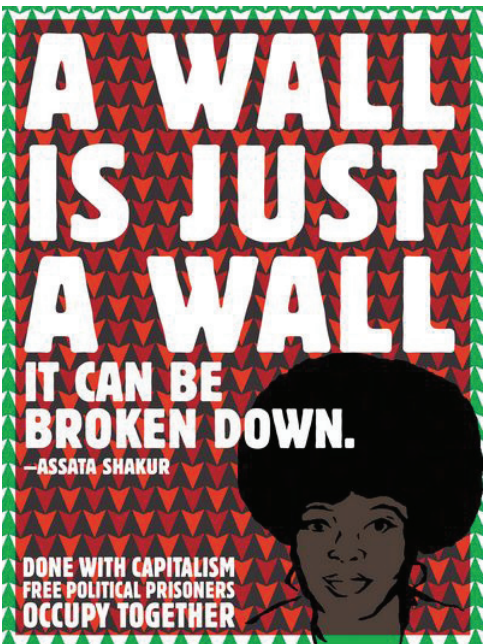


Assata Shakur Is Not a Terrorist

Mychal Denzel Smith on May 7, 2013, *The Nation*, <http://www.thenation.com/blog/174209/assata-shakur-not-terrorist#ixzz2WRYIDYUr>

“My name is Assata Shakur, and I am a 20th century escaped slave.”



So begins an open letter written by Assata Shakur, formerly of both the Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Army, currently exiled political prisoner. The letter itself dates back to 1998, but in the past week there has been renewed interest in reading Shakur in her own words, as the FBI added the iconic figure to their list of Most Wanted Terrorists and, alongside the New Jersey State Police, announced a \$2 million reward (up from the \$1 million offered in 2005) for any information that might lead to her capture.

Shakur’s infamy began after the May 2, 1973, killing of a New Jersey state trooper. In her letter, as well as in her autobiography, she recounts what happened that night, when she, along with Zayd Malik Shakur and Sundiata Acoli, were stopped on the New Jersey Turnpike for having a faulty tail light. One trooper drew his gun and told them to put their hands in the air, which Assata did. Moments later a shootout ensued, ending with the deaths of Zayd and state trooper Werner Foerster. Assata was also shot while her hands were up. Though the forensic evidence backed up her account, the state was able to convict her, and in 1977 she was sentenced to life plus thirty-three years. She has lived in Cuba, where she was granted asylum, since 1984, having escaped (or in the language of the movement, been liberated) from Clinton Correctional Facility for Women in New Jersey in 1979. Shakur and her supporters, myself included, maintain her innocence.

“It’s incredibly frustrating that the first woman to be on the FBI’s most wanted terrorist list, the same list as Osama bin Laden, would be a 65 year-old grandmother in Cuba,” writer and filmmaker dream hampton told radio host Davey D. I would add that it’s also incredibly frightening. We have seen the way this country has prosecuted the “war on terror,” even after moving away from using that specific phrase, with a blatant disregard for civil liberties, human rights, international law and the rights of sovereign countries. It’s enough to make one

very concerned for the safety of Shakur and those around her. If deemed dangerous enough, could an invasion of Cuba be far behind? A drone strike? How far is this government willing to go to capture (kill?) someone whose guilt in the crime for which she was convicted is not clear and poses no threat to the country’s security? “Assata is not a threat,” scholar and activist Angela Davis, who herself once occupied a spot on the FBI’s 10 Most Wanted Fugitives list, told Democracy Now! “If anything, this is a vendetta.”

The United States doesn’t like to lose and holds a hell of a grudge. This goes beyond J. Edgar Hoover’s declaring the Black Panther Party the “greatest threat to the internal security of the country” and vowing to eradicate them. This is the fate of anyone, particularly those with black and brown skin, who holds views deemed anti-American—which for them only reflect their status as an oppressed people (there’s controversy in asserting that all people deserve the right to food, clothing and shelter). Because what of her actions qualifies Shakur as a terrorist? Even if you believe she is responsible for Foerster’s death, that would make her responsible for one death in the early morning hours on a New Jersey highway forty years ago. If that is terrorism, if the definition is such that this purported crime fits, then in the process of labeling Assata Shakur a terrorist, the FBI has rendered the word all but meaningless. According to Davis, “the attack on [Shakur] reflects the logic of terrorism, because it precisely is designed to frighten young people, especially today, who would be involved in the kind of radical activism that might lead to change.” But there’s no one around to put law enforcement on a wanted list.

“I am only one woman,” Shakur wrote in her open letter, but the FBI has decided to make her more than that. She is a symbol of what it means to be a black woman who dares fight back. You don’t need to be sporting one of those “red, black and green liberation jump-suits” that Gil Scott-Heron talked about in order to see that this ramped up manhunt is unnecessary and an abuse of power. But it should also remind us that the struggle Shakur and her comrades took bullets for is still not over. We’re still needed on the frontlines. **Hands off Assata, now and forever.**

“It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.” - Assata Shakur

On Juneteenth and Modern Day Slavery

by witchymorg, June 19, 2013 <http://atriptothemorg.wordpress.com/2013/06/19/post-the-eighth-2/>



I want to start this by saying as a non-black Latin@ that I have less of a stake in this. While my people today are subject to increased targeting by the prison-industrial complex, my people were not subject to slavery in the North. As a mestiza from Colombia and Puerto Rico, I am unsure of what legacy I have with colonization and slavery. I write this for my non-black sisters and brothers, so that we can talk about the ways that slavery still effect us.

Today is Juneteenth. It is the day that commemorates the abolition of slavery in Texas. While the Emancipation Proclamation made slavery illegal in all of the United States in 1863, it didn’t roll out to all of the states until 1865 when the Union army came to Texas to enforce it 2 years later. In fact, Texas down right ignored the Emancipation Proclamation and the Union army had to take over the Texas government to make it happen.

Today is a day of celebration. It is the marking of a great victory. The liberation of a people from bondage. It is a commemoration that change can happen. And that often the change only comes at the point of a gun. And don’t get me wrong, I don’t think the Union army, or even Abraham Lincoln, freed the slaves because they believed in the liberation of the slaves. It was all about winning the war and having Texas conform to the federal law. Lincoln himself said that if he could have won the war without freeing slaves, he would have.

Which brings me to today. Yes, we should celebrate. Because something is better than nothing. However, our work as abolitionist is not done. We are not yet free. You see, when Lincoln wrote the 13th amendment, he outlawed slavery except when it was the punishment of a crime. Slavery is still legal. And the prison-industrial complex is the logical extension of chattel slavery. Black and brown people are still being targeted at an alarming rate for incarceration. *Continued on Page 8*

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Statement of Purpose
Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and “free world” allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

About this Newspaper
Since 2007, Black & Pink free world volunteers have pulled together a monthly newspaper primarily composed of material written by our family’s incarcerated members. In response to letters we receive, more prisoners receive the newspaper each issue!
This month, the newspaper is being sent to: 2,699 people!

We welcome submissions of stories, articles, poems, and some art for the B&P Newsletter. We focus on submissions that deal with being LGBTQ, being in prison, and resistance, survival, and activism. We also focus on pieces that strengthen the Family, and further the values and goals of B&P, as we are unable to publish everything we receive. For each piece we like about 500 words, typed or handwritten. We can sometimes put longer pieces in two newspapers. We try to make at least half of the Newsletter written by people in prison. We cannot pay for submissions, though we do not charge for sending the Newsletter to people. We unfortunately have to avoid “promoting inmate to inmate communication” because it gets the newsletter banned from some prisons. For this reason, we only put people’s first names and State after their submission. Also, when responding to the writing of other people, please direct your thoughts and feelings to the whole family, rather than to individuals. Keep your writing coming!! You make it happen.

Disclaimer:
Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in the Black & Pink Newspaper are solely those of the authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black & Pink. Black & Pink makes no representations as to the accuracy of any statements made in the Newspaper, including but not limited to legal and medical information. Authors and artists bear sole responsibility for their work.

A Message from Jason

Dear friends,
We hope you had a Happy Pride month! Every June LGBTQ people around the country (and many around the world) remember the beginning days of the LGBTQ movement. June was chosen because it is the anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion. On June 28, 1969 police raided the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street in New York City. It was not uncommon for the police to harass people at gay bars. At that time it was illegal to serve alcohol to “homosexuals.” Cops would set up stings at bars. They would go in plain clothes before bringing in back up to arrest people. It was also illegal to wear clothing of the “opposite sex.” If you were a transgender person or a drag queen you could be arrested simply for the clothes you were wearing. Most bars were not owned by gay people and the Stonewall Inn was run by the mafia. In order to keep running the bar goers or bar owners would have to pay off the cops. There were lots of ways that people resisted prior to June 28th. There were backdoors to sneak out of. There were light tricks to warn people to stop touching and stop dancing if the cops showed up. There was a lot of creativity by those expressing themselves and living their lives. This particular night was a change in tactics – people fought back with heels, beer bottles, fists, and anything else they could get their hands on – Stonewall was a police riot!



Sylvia Rivera (holding the hammer) and Marsha P. Johnson (with cooler) of the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (S.T.A.R.) at the Christopher Street Liberation Day, Gay Pride Parade, NYC (24 June 1970). Photographer Leonard Pink. Reprinted, by permission, from National History Archives of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center.

Stonewall Inn were not only one night, it lasted nearly a week. Each night more people came to take over Christopher Street. The street was filled with homeless youth, sex workers, transgender women, gay men, drag queens, and others fighting for freedom. On the second night Marsha P. Johnson, a Black transgender woman who would later be a co-founder of the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), climbed up a lamp post and dropped a heavy bag on top of a cop car, shattering its windshield. The people who made our movement grow were poor people, transgender women of color, thieves, sex workers, and people with arrest records pages and pages long. Pride month belongs to you!

Just after the week of resistance on Christopher street a new organization came to form, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF). This was the first organization to use the word “gay” in its title. The flyer they handed out calling people to their first meeting read, “Do you think homosexuals are revolting? You bet your sweet ass we are!” The Gay Liberation Front took its name to show support for the anti-Vietnam War movement and other struggles for justice around the world. The GLF took actions alongside the Black Panther Party, anti-war demonstrations, and fought for the

freedom of prisoners. Black and Pink organizes in this tradition. We know that our struggles for freedom are made stronger by siding with other people fighting for their freedom. This is why we support Palestinians fighting for freedom. This is why we support immigrant justice and work to tear down borders between nations. This is why we support access to abortion throughout the country. This why we fight for better schools. **When you think of freedom, when you think of a world without cages, what do you dream of? What possibilities are there for you when you think about our history and the possibility of our great future?**

This year Black and Pink volunteers were at Boston Pride again. We will also be at Chicago Pride and we are sending materials to San Antonio, San Francisco, New York City, and Portland, Oregon. We are forcing LGBTQ people to remember those in our family who are not able to be at Pride because they are locked behind bars. We are reminding those at Pride that if we want to have a world of justice then we must abolish the prison industrial complex. This year we plan to hand out thousands of stickers and pens with our logo and information on them. We will also hand out condoms that read, “End prison condom ban.” We want to inspire people to get involved, get pen pals, and join Black and Pink.

We keep up all of our work knowing that once there were no prisons, that day with come again.

In love and solidarity,
Jason

PS: This newspaper is a joint June/July issue so that we can get back on track to get newspapers out at the beginning of the month. The next newspaper will come in early August. We apologize, and thanks for understanding.



Black & Pink’s popular 2013 Boston Pride booth
Hundreds of people passed through, took information, and signed up!

Dear Black & Pink,

Subscribers, and others that read. This is C-God getting back, with more paypack! I hope that my previous revelation motivated you all. [See B&P Newsletter November 2012, in which C-God reports on filing grievances after being physically assaulted by a guard]. As I hope the present one does also.

The previous Teleconference in Sept of 2012 went well. My case was filed. And what surprised even me, was I was sleeping one afternoon, and someone knocked on my cell door. I thought it was chow time. To my surprise, it was the O.I.G. [Office of the Inspector General]. I really didn't know what to make of the situation at first. So I stayed cool, calm, and collected.

The O.I.G. Said, "I would like to speak with you about an incident involving an assault that took place with two C.O.'s." I just nodded my head in acknowledgment. We went over the basics first. Then he asked me if I wanted to file criminal charges. I agreed and was pulled out for a verbal statement on a tape recorder, and a written statement on a criminal case voluntary statement form. I got a copy of my statement for my file. Then I was back in full motivation mode with my unexpected progress.

My next surprise came when I was called to the Major's office to speak with the O.I.G from the unit via telephone. I was asked if I would submit to a polygraph test. So they would be able to build a very strong case against those two C.O.'s before the report is submitted to the D.A.'s office. I agreed, and an undisclosed date is set. I hope that this situation inspires those who read it, because motivation is a must. Take that! Take that! Back to back! The big payback!

C-God, Texas

Dear Black & Pink,

Greetings! I'm writing to send my utmost love & respect to all of my LGBTQ sisters and brothers who hold their heads up with Pride!

In response to the March 2013 Newspaper- I'm glad to see more focus given to our Sisters in women's prisons. The articles "Solidarity With Palestinian Women Under Israeli Occupation" and "Lynne Stewart's Message for International Women's Day" were great! Also, to my revolutionary comrade Malik, I say "Right on!" and raise my fist in solidarity.

As a Black & Pink Leadership Circle member, and revolutionary feminist trans-woman prisoner, I am 100% devoted to LGBTQ & Women's Liberation! I even have "Pink Revolution!" tattooed on back of my forearms!

I am an "Amazon Queen!" (also tattooed on me), and no newbie to the revolutionary struggle! Nor am I naive enough to believe the law reforms will ever go far enough to end homophobic/transphobic discrimination & violence. Like Bob Marley says, we Must "Get up, stand up! Stand up for your rights!"

Down with Patriarchy!
Down with Prisoners!
Girl Power!

In Struggle,
Jennifer "Baby Girl," B&P Leadership Circle, California

Black & Pink,

The letters that come in are very inspirational. It's a beautiful thing, reading the letters of our brothers & sisters telling their stories which I believe you'll agree will help others do the same thing. There's nothing freer than releasing that emotional energy that we spend holding back a secret that we believed would do us more harm than good, but it's when we gather the strength to say, you know what, the hell what they think, me being gay is not going to kill me nor is it going to kill you, then we realize we've been our own worst enemy.

The joy comes when you release yourself and the letters have proven that. Continue to embrace your beautiful life 'cause you are made this way and there's nothing wrong with whom you love & how you love them. To all the haters who's hating on us, why are you hating? Is it the fact that we know who we are? That we are free to be?

To all my brothers and sisters that read Black & Pink and are still in the closet, know that you are loved and will continue to be loved. You'll always have a family with us.

With all the love in the world,

James, California

Black & Pink Family, Brothers & Sisters,
Let me start with a prayer.

My wings are torn and my flight is long. I ask you to carry me.
My heart is strong but my soul is weak,
and I ask that you carry me
Forgive my transgressions and reopen my eyes, all I ask is to carry me.
Amen.

Well, it's Deon. I have bad news and I ask that we all seek help for those we know are in abusive relationships. I ask that every LGBT who is being forced to stay while living in fear to grow wings and fly. We are special people and live life for happiness, we will be the new normal here in America. So love and protect one another. Peace to you all.

Love,
Deon



In honor of my fallen prison friend:
Lizzie Mae Nolan
May 21, 1966 – February 5, 2013
Died of trauma to the head in prison

Dear B&P Family,

My name is Justin. My friends call me Malici. Pronounced like Malichi. I'm a 30 year old bisexual man serving a 10 year sentence in north Texas. First is my coming out story, then something new that happened.

I was older than most I've read about. I was 15 when I realized that I like men also. My first experience was with my best friend Stephen at 15, and it was a little awkward and uncomfortable at first then the rest was heaven and history. Telling my Mom was easy 'cause she was open minded and knew before I did. My Dad was harder. I knew what he was like. "Fags are worse than hobo's and vagrants," he'd say. With him being a cop, it made it worse. When I told him, he went off the handle and beat me up. Try as I did to fight back he was just too much in his rage. After, I could hardly walk and left to Stephen's house to get looked at and tended to. After the summer came to an end, during which my father hardly spoke to me, I went back to school. The next 3 years were hard, my father couldn't accept me for who I was. When I was 18 and out of school, I sat on the porch smoking one time when he came home from work. He saw me and sat next to me and we finally, after 3 ½ years, talked about it without shouting. We smoked and drank a couple beers and I explained to him that I was still the same person I was growing up and being bisexual didn't change that. He was still unhappy about it but finally accepted me for it. That moment in my life means more to me than anything. For all of you who are struggling with the decision of telling your parents, I tell you this- It's not gonna be easy, and you can't expect things to go the way mine did. Those 3 years were harder on me that you might expect. My Dad took it harder. He's still making the effort and I love him for it.

I recently had to defend myself against a rape attempt on me. I'm not all that "buff," a whopping 165 lbs at 6'2". But I stopped it with minor injuries. I tried to report it, but the guards scoffed at me and it didn't go nowhere. I've tried for Safe Protection but to no avail. So, as it is, I took things into my own hands and fought back. I empower you all that are victims of extortion and rape, and rape attempts, to fight, fight with all your heart in any way you can.

I'm still adding those featured in the Newspaper, past and current, to my prayer list. As a Wiccan, to all Wiccan B&P members, friend and family, I encourage you, as I do, to make talismans for those around you and help in any way you can.

The PIC will crumble and burn. We will all be there in warm embraces and kisses as well as shouts of joy and happiness. I love you all with all my heart and soul. To my brothers and sisters in the prison system, keep your heads held high and pray for all of us. You all have my love and prayers. For Sasha Taylor, I may be one of many that hopes you are well and would like to know how you're doing

With love, hugs, and kisses,
Justin aka Malici, Texas

Dearest Extended Family at Black & Pink,

Hello to all my beautiful brothers and sisters both on the inside and the outside! Gay, Bi, Transexual, and Alternative lifestyle people everywhere!

My name is Kitty. I am a 49 year old, 6’8”, pre-operative, transexual currently incarcerated in New York. I have been a part of the Black and Pink family for about 5 years now. I am so proud to be a part of this very important movement.

I am writing this letter to you to discuss addiction. We are such fabulous people and that can mean everything gay is eccentric. We have to have all of the most fabulous stuff. Designer clothing! Expensive accessories! The most beautiful boys! The most gorgeous girls! And... the best drugs.

I have been an advocate for transgender people for decades. And I have been a drug addict for all of my life. I’ve written several letters that have been published in the Black & Pink Newsletter before. Some of you already know me.

Last year on March 13th I was released from a Maximum security prison in NY state. I arrived there in 2009 to do a 2-4, and wound up doing the entire 4 years. Why? Because I got in trouble several times for smoking marijuana!

When I did finally get released, I was going to the Sylvia Rivera Law Project in NYC to bond with all of our fabulous brothers and sisters who did so much for me during my incarceration. I was attending different meetings and workshops there.

Then I started smoking crack and boosting from the art galleries and antique shops to support my habit again. I only lasted another month living like that before I was arrested, not once, not twice, not even 3 times... but 4. I’ve been back in jail for 10 months now, and just copped out to a 2 ½ – 5 with the possibility of doing Willard, a military days drug program. If I’m eligible that’s where I’ll be going. If not I will be returning back upstate to do time. This will make a total of 25 years behind bars. Away from my family, away from my friends, away from our community.

During my recent stay in prison I have witnessed more assaults on our people. For no other reason than that we choose to live our lives differently than the average criminal. Of course I do not stand for this type of behavior and inflict bodily harm on anyone who brings us any harm.

It’s very unfortunate that I’ve got to go back up there to deal with yet more ignorance and biased behavior, but I assure each of all of you, my beautiful brothers and sisters whom are reading this letter, that it will be my last time. Life is beautiful, and it’s too short, and I plan on celebrating my womanhood once again!

Thank you! All of you, for sending in your letters! And sharing your stories with me. As you have given me inspiration to go on yet another day and to continue to advocate for all of us as well as to live my life drug free and deal with my issues one day at a time. I urge all of you to do the same.

Until the next issue, God Bless. I close this letter but never my heart. Please stay away from the evils of drugs. I love you all.

Miss Kitty, New York

Greetings My LGBTQ Brothers & Sisters,

How are you all doing? Well me, I’m blessed by the most high. My name is Jeremy, but I go by Brielle J. Brooks. I’m 30 years old, and have been living 30 years on this earth with HIV, by birth. I am a happy Gay Queen from the state of Louisiana. Well, I do want you all to know that we must all “Stand up for each other, no matter what!” I have been gay all my life and my family loves me and takes me as I am. That is itself a blessing. See my life was not to make it past 13 years old, but God said otherwise. 30 years strong and I’m looking good. Well, my lover is HIV- and he is a gay man and loves me very much. We met in prison and he goes home before me, but we plan to be with each other out there in the free world.

I have a 7 year piece for Agg. Arson; yes I did do it, but God forgave me and now I’m living a better life. Once I get out of prison, I look to become a fighter on the outside for Black & Pink and LGBTQ Family. My word to my LGBTQ Family is: “Be strong, never give up, never let go, walk with your head up and know God will pull you through any and all you go through!”

I’m about to close, but not my love, until next time, I love you all at Black & Pink and my LGBTQ Family.

Love, Peace, and Happiness in all you go through!

Brielle Jell-o Brooks, Louisiana



Dear Black & Pink Family,

I have just received my third issue of Black & Pink Newspaper and I must say that, I never knew that there were people who really care. As a proud out gay man in Texas, it truly bothers me to see what my brothers & sisters go through in other states.

In Texas, we have at least some protection from abuse by our captors- the state legislator adopted a zero tolerance policy regarding the sexual abuse, including consensual* sexual contact of an inmate in the custody of the department.

I encourage my brothers & sisters in other states that suffer abuse whether sexual or otherwise to write your state Rep. They will listen, have family and friends write them also. The prison-industrial complex does not like outside phone calls.

In response to the article about Native American Sacred Circles in the April 2013 Newspaper, I want to say I too am Native American, a Two Spirit as well. If the elders in the circle knew anything, they would know that most of the shamen of old were Two Spirits. Here at the unit I’m at, some of the people want to try and talk down on us, but I shut them down as soon as they start. I have been a bundle keeper, and in some Native American cultures a Two Spirit is the only one that can even handle the bundle.

So if the elders there would look into things the right way, especially the old ways, and focus on being truly Native American (instead of playing Indian), then that circle would grow as the one has here. Be a Proud Native American and Proud Two Spirit.

Remember, just like the song says, “It only takes a spark to get a fire going.”

Love, hugs, respect,

Tommy, Texas

**Editor’s Note: Black & Pink supports the right of consensual sexual activity.*



Dear Black & Pink Family,

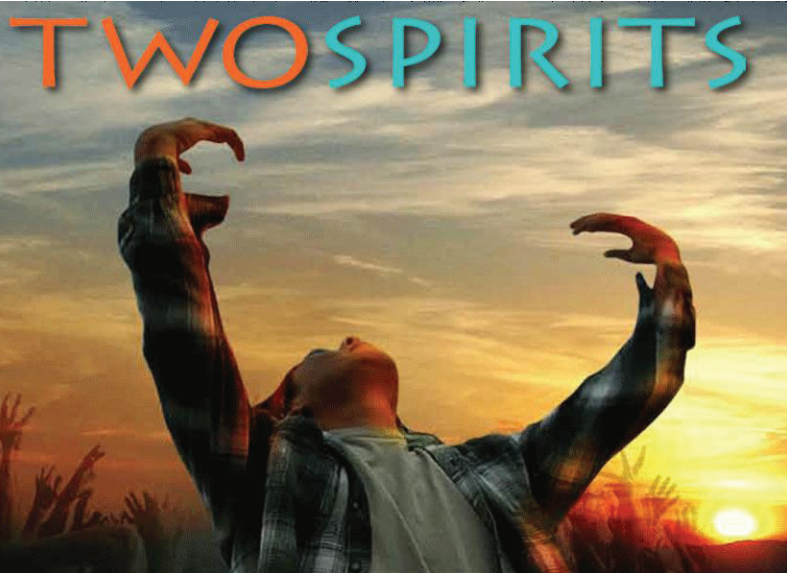
Hi! My name is O (pronounced “Oh”), and I am a 50 year old bisexual two spirit. I have been in prison most of my life and not surprisingly have no family or friends outside of prison (other than my B&P family).

First, I was really happy (and encouraged) by the Newspaper format, it is great! Second, the idea of enlisting family advocacy through the paper is genius! I love the sense of belonging and participation I get with every issue and want everyone of my B&P family, inside and out, to know I love you all and appreciate all the support and what you’ve done, and continue to do, for us- the lost, forgotten, misunderstood, abused, etc. I was released from Seg on 4-2-13 and am right back in the struggle. “Hell hath no fury like that of a woman scorned,” I always say, and I am plenty scorned!

Anyway, just thought you should know!

Love you all!

-O, Nevada



Dear Black & Pink Family,

I was pleased to see that my advocacy request was printed in the Jan/Feb ‘13 Newspaper. For those of you whom wrote or called in to support me, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks. Thanks to the Illinois prisoner who took the time to do some research and respond; we need more proactive people. I want to give the Black & Pink family some updates on my fight in Michigan to change the discriminatory, unlawful policy that is being wielded against HIV+ prisoners to indefinitely confine them in segregation.

When my letter was printed there were some haters whom chose to use the letter to try to tear me down, because in writing the letter I not only outed my sexuality but also my HIV+ status. It’s all good though; if I cared what haters thought about me, I would not have submitted the letter in the first place and requested that it be published. But let me take this opportunity to tell you a few things.

In writing my letter and outing myself, I was advocating not only for myself, but for all the prisoners that came before me and whom will come after me, and will be subjected to a destructive, unlawful policy of discrimination. I am engaged in a fight to change a policy and a statute that will affect all prisoners. To all my LGBT brothers and sisters whom used my letter against me to try to hurt me, remember this: People who live in glass houses should not throw stones. If you are gay or just “use” boys to help you do your bit, this is the life we live; who are you gonna turn to when your world comes crashing down around you? And whether you are positive or not, chances are that you know someone who has HIV or has died of AIDS. So stop the hating!

Anyhow, I want everyone to know that I have been released from Administrative Segregation. I was in “the Hole” for 11½ months, but now I am back in GP. However, I have been sent to a maximum security (Level V) joint damn near in Siberia. Now I am fighting to be returned to my “true” security level, i.e. Level I, in a minimum security joint.

The fight to change the policy and statute continues. I have several state and national organizations involved now, including the Michigan ACLU, and some attorneys. They have prepared a 13-page letter that includes 26 footnotes, which they are sending out to the Director, Deputy Director, Chief Medical Officer, and other prison officials, calling on them to change the policy. Plus they are including a USB stick with the letter that has PDF files of all the articles and reports referenced in the letter, and in the event that the MDOC does not act upon the recommendations made in the letter, they have several other organizations, attorneys, and physicians lined up to take the fight to the next level.

I am also working on a media campaign to bring attention to the practice of segregating HIV+ prisoners. I particularly want to reach out to the MDOC prisoners who have been, or are in segregation pursuant to PD 03.04.120, Control of Communicable Bloodborne Diseases. I hope to set up a way for you to communicate, perhaps with the attorneys assisting me. Hold on, because help is on the way.

I am enclosing a press release from the ACLU [see below] announcing a federal court decision striking down Alabama prison policy of segregating HIV positive inmates as unlawful, and a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act (RA). The 153 page opinion in Henderson et al v Thomas et al will have a profound effect for all HIV positive prisoners who are subject to being segregated because of their HIV status, as it undermined and essentially abrogated another federal decision, Onishea v Hopper, 171 F.3d 1289 (11th Cir. 1999) that other states, like Michigan, rely on to uphold their unlawful policies of segregating HIV positive inmates.

Join the fight!

Yours Truly,
John D., Michigan

Judge Orders Alabama to Stop Segregation of HIV Prisoners in Alabama

Decision from ACLU Lawsuit Paves Way for HIV Prisoners to Have Access to Services, Classes and Training Available to Other Prisoners, December 21, 2012, *Source: <http://www.aclu.org/prisoners-rights/judge-orders-alabama-stop-segregation-hiv-prisoners-alabama>*

MONTGOMERY, Ala. -- A federal judge today ordered Alabama to stop segregating prisoners living with HIV, ruling that the practice violates the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

U.S. District Court Judge Myron H. Thompson ruled in a class-action lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of all Alabama prisoners with HIV that the Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) discriminates against the prisoners by housing them separately from all other prisoners and categorically denies them equal access to prison rehabilitative programs.

The court ruled the ADA prohibits blanket disability-based exclusions and mandates that prisoners with disabilities must be housed in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of the individuals. Exceptions may be made only on an individualized, case-by-case basis if the specific situation warrants different treatment. Thompson said in his decision: “It is evident that, while the ADOC’s categorical segregation policy has been an unnecessary tool for preventing the transmission of HIV, it has been an effective one for humiliating and isolating prisoners living with the disease.” “Today’s decision is historic,” said Margaret Winter, associate director of the ACLU National Prison Project and lead counsel for the plaintiffs. “It spells an end to a segregation policy that has inflicted needless misery on Alabama prisoners with HIV and their families.” The court ordered Alabama to develop a plan to end its discriminatory practices, which the ACLU argued included its categorical exclusion of prisoners with HIV from work-release jobs in the food industry, from assignment to faith-based honor dorms, and from a host of other rehabilitative, educational, trade skills and vocational programs.

“Ending a policy that treated human beings like cattle to be tagged and herded is a tremendous victory for human rights,” said Olivia Turner, executive director of the ACLU of Alabama, which participated in the lawsuit. The court found that HIV-positive prisoners with serious mental health needs and substance abuse problems were wrongfully excluded even from critically important treatment programs.

The court’s decision also bans Alabama’s policy of requiring all male prisoners with HIV to always wear white armbands to alert others of their status, which Winter characterized as “a latter-day yellow star.” The suit, Henderson et al. v. Thomas et al, was filed last year. There are approximately 240 male and 10 female prisoners living with HIV in the Alabama prison system.

During a month-long trial that began Sept. 17 in Montgomery, the ACLU argued that Alabama’s HIV policy is not based on legitimate interests in safety and is unnecessary to prevent the transmission of HIV. Experts testified that the risk of transmitting HIV is virtually nonexistent for patients properly treated with modern HIV medications. And in surprise testimony, ADOC’s associate commissioner in charge of security admitted on cross-examination that he no longer believes the HIV-segregation policy is justified.

“Alabama’s policies regarding prisoners living with HIV are relics from an era of hysteria,” said Amanda Goad, staff attorney with the ACLU AIDS Project. “We look forward to seeing the Department of Corrections fully implement Judge Thompson’s decision and end its discriminatory practices.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters at Black & Pink,

I was placed on the mailing list for the B&P Newspaper. I received my first issue, and was anxiously looking forward to the next issue. And what did I get instead? A Notice of Rejection or impoundment of publication. And the reason for rejecting and impounding it? “It is dangerously inflammatory in that it advocates or encourages riot, insurrection, disruption of the institution, violation of department of institution rules;” and “It otherwise presents a threat to the security, good order, or discipline of the correctional system or the safety of any person.” So now I wonder if I will ever see another issue of Black & Pink Newspaper.

The Newspaper helps me in my everyday struggle against the Prison Industrial Complex. It shows me that it is nationwide. And I do not see how B&P Newspaper could cause rioting. This is a clear violation of the right to admissible reading material. B&P has provided nothing but positive, and constructive advice and moral support. The Prison Industrial Complex does not want the masses to be knowledgeable, so they seek to censor what prisoners are allowed to receive. So obviously you are doing something right, B&P. So continue to do that. And to all of my brothers and sisters incarcerated, keep your heap up and never lose sight of the bigger picture- prison abolition, and bringing down the PIC.

You are all in my heart and prayers.

With love and solidarity,

Greg, Florida

Editor’s Note: We believe that most of the over 2500 Newspapers sent to prison get delivered. We do however get notices of rejection like the one above from some federal and state prisons. We believe this rejection is wrong, and support efforts to allow the Newspaper in. It is not a fight we have been able to put much effort into yet, but it is a fight we believe is important and would like to be part of.

From Me to You Black & Pink

Roses are red,
Violets are blue
This poem is simply
From me to you

To say I love you
And will always be there
If not in the physical
At least in prayer

I hope you stand tall
And proud of your life
To show us your beauty
That ends all strife

You're a sun
You're a star
Rather King or Queen
How beautiful you are

Rose are red
Violets are blue
This poem is simply
From me to you

You can come to
Black & Pink
Sharing your story
Without feeling discrimination or abuse

Black & Pink
Is an organization
With Allies
That is run by LGBTQ
And helps support
LGBTQ individuals

You can come to Black & Pink
And they will
Open arms to you
Because we love you

Black & Pink
Is a place to be
I'm proud to
Call Black & Pink
My extended family

-Juicy, Pennsylvania

By Shy-Shy, California

My Black & Pink Family,
I wrote a poem, "To My Beautiful Community"
that was in the April Newspaper, which I wrote in
hopes to encourage someone that it is okay to be
who you are and be happy doing it. You should
not have to hide who you are to please someone
else. My motto is, "If a person can't accept all
of who I am in entirety and what or who makes
me happy, then that's their problem. I don't need
them in my life."
Of course, It took me awhile, but with love,
encouragement, and support, I realized that
I deserve to be happy without other people's
negative views/opinions. My wonderful husband
helped me reach this point in my life and so much
more. It only seemed fitting to acknowledge my
inspiration with this poem. Enjoy!

Mr. Inspiration

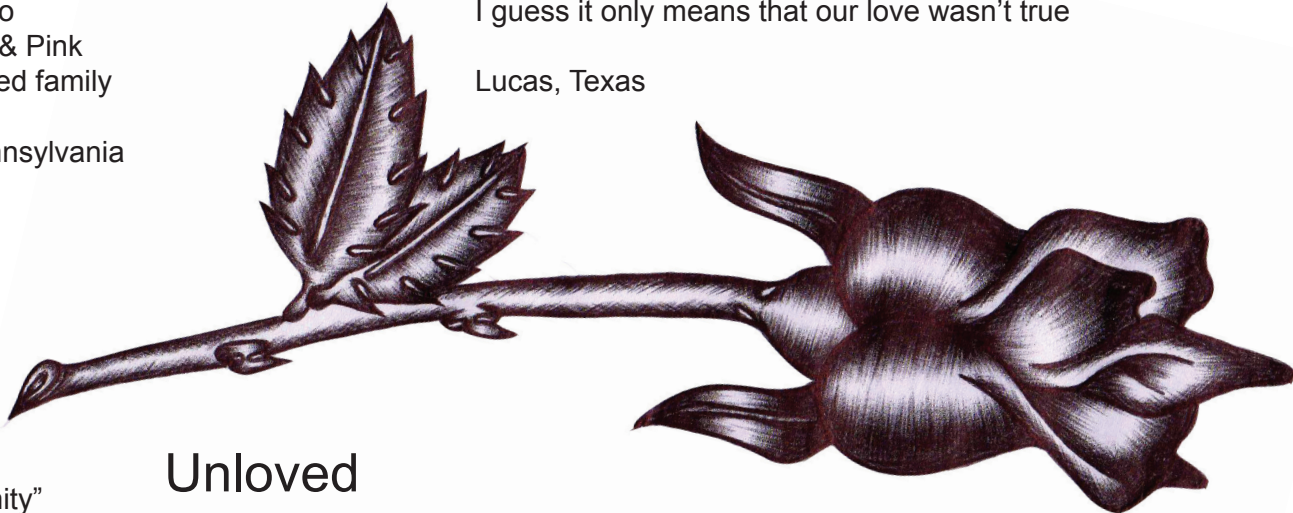
As people get to know
These words that I write
Is is only fair
I bring you into the light
You are more than just my man
More than just my best friend
You are my support
You encourage me to the end
You do more than that
More than these listed few
But unlike most people
I give credit when it's due
My work has nearly tripled
Since we got together
My confidence has sky-rocketed
Since you showed me I deserve better
So I say to you
Without any hesitation
I love and thank you
My Mr. Inspiration

Puddin, Pennsylvania

Lil' Man

There was this guy I knew who loved to make me cry
He sold me on forever and that he'd love me till he died
He said he'd take a bullet if he ever had to for me
This was one of the lies he told to wheel me into thee
Our relationship was rocky but somehow we'd force it through
He made me want to kill myself on an occasion or two
I've had a lot of secrets and this was from day one
We loved to punch each other and most times just for fun
He introduced me to Crystyl Meth, also known as Ice
It became my whole world and took over my life
It made us do crazy things like have orgies with random men
Sometimes when my boy would leave I'd call up one of them
But don't mistake me for the bad guy because I know he did it too
He probably cheated more than me but that's how those guys do
I really hate this person but I can't seem to let it be
And now I sit in prison and he claimed he'd be waiting
But now it's been 7 months and I haven't heard a word
I think he got his shit together from what my sister heard
But what he doesn't know is that I'm all better too
I guess it only means that our love wasn't true

Lucas, Texas



Unloved

Never have I felt love, and I often wonder why?
How could a heart so warm and tender, keep its silence,
While throbbing deep inside...
Guess, it's those questions left unanswered, but love that's passed me by
Creating such confusion, mixed emotions cloud my mind
Yes this just may be the reason that I've kept hidden on the inside
Years of tears that to the outside
I've never learned to cry
My heart's become so fragile, drenched in the many tears I've tried to hide
When you're overcome with mixed emotions and pain that clouds your mind
You must hold on tight, and never let go
And leave your heart hung out to dry
For surely it will crumble, wither away and slowly die
Let go of those unanswered questions by love that's passed you by
A heart so warm and tender never should surrender
And will strengthen if given time
A heart so warm and tender, surely will survive!

-David "Silent", Texas

Possession

In my heart there lives a small child
Eager 2 love, anxious 2 please
Destined 2 change merciless souls
And infect your world like a disease
In my mind there lives a great soldier
Fearless in motion, relentless in stride
In search of the ones intent to destroy
This paradise built from inside
In my soul lives an adventurer
Ready 2 die, quick to explore
Hungry 4 change, they battle my brain
One man possessed by all 4
Wanting to free my spirit
But the world ain't ready 2 see
Through stress and pain, I struggle 2 gain
A place in this world 4 me

-David, Texas

Taken from my hands

I used to see the beauty
in the most simplest of things
Oftentimes so mesmerized
by the joy in me they'd bring
I'd become enchanted
and my focus so intent
Questioning what in the world
their significance really meant
But, it was not until you were
taken from my hands
That the beauty love can bring
I began to understand
As entangled in the heartache
that I was to become
I learned to see the gems and jewels
within the beauty of our love

-Keven J, Texas

Call for Submissions to New Erotica Zine!

Seeking erotic short stories and poems by Black & Pink incarcerated and free-world family members for a new 'zine.
Please send submissions to our Black & Pink - Gabrielle.
This is a voluntary project, and no money will be offered for submissions, but you might get the chance to share your spicy story with many others! To subscribe to receive erotica, write to our new address, Black & Pink - Erotica.



Black & Pink Pen-Pal Information Form!

If you have not done so in the past 12 months (to reduce mail so we reply faster), please mail this form to **Black and Pink –Form**, and include a picture & “first letter” written to a potential new pen-pal for us to scan if you wish!

“I agree to this information being posted online.” Sign: _____ Date _____

Preferred Name: _____ Pronoun (she/he/ze): _____

Your Legal Name: _____ #: _____

Address: _____

Please check ☒ the types of pen-pal relationships you are interested in:
(Please note most “free world” pen-pals that visit our website are *not* interested in romance or sexy letters)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Having a pen-pal friendship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Having a pen-pal romance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing about social justice or activism	<input type="checkbox"/>	Writing sexy/erotic letters

Please provide this optional information if you want! People can search most of these items on our website:

Age & Birth date	<input type="text"/>	/	/	In Solitary Confinement?	<input type="text"/>
Race	<input type="text"/>			Does anyone write you now? How many people write?	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>			Specific types of pen-pals you are looking for: (<i>Most pen-pals want non-romantic friendships</i>)	<input type="text"/>
Sexuality	<input type="text"/>				
Faith	<input type="text"/>				
Non-English Language	<input type="text"/>				
Release Date?	<input type="text"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Can you get mail from / write to <i>all other prisoners?</i>	No, I can't!
HIV Status (<i>private</i>)	<input type="text"/>				Yes, I can!

Tell us about who you are (for example, your background, hobbies and interests, beliefs, situation, etc!):
If you have a webpage: [www. _____](#)

Do we have permission to display a picture of you from a corrections website? _____ Yes _____ No

Names and email addresses of any current pen-pals so we can involve them in Black and Pink:

Your address, email and phone upon release (if applicable) so that we can keep you involved in the family:

MAIL TO: Black and Pink– Form, 614 Columbia Rd, Dorchester, MA 02125

Black & Pink Incarcerated Family Feedback--Tell us about the newspaper

In the last Black & Pink newspaper we included our first feedback slip and got 17 responses. We asked if members liked the idea of a Feedback slip (16 Yes / 1 No), reviving the art program in a new way (17 Yes / 0 No), and allotting funds to hire a director (16 Yes / 1 No). This month, we'd like to get your feedback on the Black & Pink newspaper itself. Of the newspaper submissions that we receive, we prioritize submissions that highlight resistance, queer liberation, and prison abolition. It has occurred to the editors that we should provide more guidance. Which sections do you like / dislike / what do you want to see more of? Do you have any ideas for how it could be improved? We are seeking a new long-term volunteer newspaper editor, so now is a good time to think about ways to enhance your publication! Thank you in advance for all of your honest feedback and ideas! When we make decisions, your input will make a big impact.

rip slip here

PLEASE MAIL THIS SLIP SOON TO **BLACK AND PINK-FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPATE!** Feel free to write more on a separate page!
Do you think the newspaper needs to also be in Spanish? ____YES ____NO Other: _____
Please mark **X** for any of the following things you would like to see added to the newspaper:
____Happy Birthdays ____Prisoner Artwork ____Tips on Writing a Pen-Pal ____Advice Column ____LGBTQ gossip ____News of revolutionary struggles

Section of Newspaper	How do you feel about it? What do you like? What should we change?
Front page articles	
Message from Jason	
Letters to our Family	
Trans, Two-Spirit, Gender Non-Conforming Voices	
Struggling for Rights!	
Poetry from the Heart	
Back Page: Updates and News	
Back Page: Addresses	
Your new idea and why:	

Continued from Page 1 The sentences that black and brown people face are much harsher then for their white counterparts. And all too often they are convicted of crimes that were necessary for their survival. The inheritance of slavery is still plain to see in the generational poverty that Black folks have and the generational wealth that white folks have access too.

Whats more, folks who are funneled into the prison system then become virtually free labor for multinational corporations. Companies like Victoria Secret, Microsoft, Forever 21, Boeing etc all use prison labor to make their products. And these prisoners make pennies a day. On top of that, private prisons are booming and the prison industry is now a many billion dollar industry. The government and corporations are still reaping profit from the bodies of black and brown people. And it starts young. Young people of color are being targeted at alarming rates by schools and are being funneled into the prison system. And once in, it is very difficult to escape. The prison-industrial complex is the result of 400 hundred years of colonial, patriarchal and capitalist violence. It is the tool of the state to continue to commit genocide against black and brown communities. Instead of private ownership, bodies are now owned by the state and given to the profit of corporations.

The other thing that is interesting to me is how the movement against human trafficking has capitalized on the term “modern day slavery” to paint women who are trafficked as helpless victims. Don’t get me wrong, I think that human trafficking is a terrible thing that should be stopped. No one should be forced to do things against their will. However, the response that anti-human trafficking advocates have is to further criminalize sex work and to rely on state power and incarceration. This not only makes things harder for sex workers who aren’t trafficked but also doesn’t address the underlying reasons for human trafficking, namely colonial and state violence. All of the solutions that the mainstream anti-trafficking movements advocates for actually make the lives of trafficked women harder. All the while obscuring the very real ways bodies are being owned here in the US. Because the anti-human trafficking movement frames the problem as something that happens in other countries and not here in the US. And that the way to save all of those poor brown women is through imperial violence and conquest.

But the state will not protect you. You cannot solve a problem with the problem. And we are none of us free, until we are all free.



This year, three Black & Pink volunteers, drake, Reed and Walker, attended the 12th Annual Philadelphia Trans-Health Conference where they presented an 80 minute workshop titled “Trans Prisoners: The Prison Industrial Complex, Survival, and Solidarity”. 60 people packed the room!

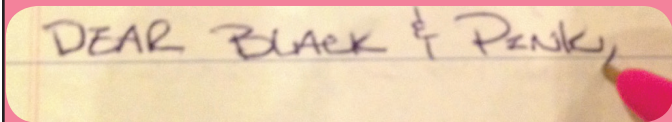
We described the workshop by stating: “Transprisoners are often so isolated and insulated from our community that we may as well be on another planet” wrote Michelle Lynn Kosilek to the Black & Pink family newsletter after having won a decade-long legal battle for access to gender affirming surgery. Denial of gender affirming surgery is but one form of abuse experienced by transgender people in prison, in addition to sexual, physical, verbal and mental abuse. The abuse of trans people in prison, particularly transwomen of color, is pervasive and part of a larger system of oppression. Our struggle is for an end to mass incarceration and the abolition of the prison industrial complex (PIC). The only way to create the healthy communities we strive for is to include campaigns that shut prisons down. The group will form a shared understanding of the PIC and its specific impacts on trans and gender non-conforming people, learn about acts of solidarity and resistance, and ways to participate in the struggle!”

While the conference covered many, many topics, other related great workshops included:

- Addressing the Health Care and Social Service Needs of Trans* Folks in the Sex Trade
- Creating a Safer Space to Discuss HIV/STI Risk with Trans People Engaged in Sex Work
- Sex Workers and Trafficking Survivors: Lessons from Our work with the Transgender Community
- They Can’t Take That Away From Us: Fighting ‘Condoms As Evidence’
- Trans Sex Work and the Law
- Beware of the Lily Law: Incarceration of Trans* and Gender Non-Conforming People Past and Present
- Transgender Injustice: Police Encounters and Incarceration, A Know Your Rights Workshop

It’s great to know that hundreds of trans people from around the around the US are learning more about issues that affect our family! Details at: <http://www.trans-health.org>

Addresses: Please note our new address for all mail!

	Black & Pink - _____ 614 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02125
If you would like to request:	Please write this in the top line of the address:
Newsletter Subscriptions (Start or Stop)	Black & Pink - Newsletter Subscriptions
Newsletter Submissions (Poems, Art & Stories)	Black & Pink - Newsletter Submissions
“Outside” Free Pen-Pal Request (Please note: Pen-Pal Request Form will be in this newsletter quarterly)	Black & Pink - Pen-Pal
Address Change (Will take a little time to update; at this time, we are mostly unable to send back issues.)	Black & Pink - Address Change
Black & Pink Organization Feedback (especially the slip on Page 7)	Black & Pink - Feedback
Request Erotica	Black & Pink - Erotica
Submit to Erotica Zine	Black & Pink - Gabrielle
Religious Support	Black & Pink - Religion
Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	Black & Pink - Volunteer
Advocacy Requests (include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help)	Black & Pink - Advocacy
Art: Stay tuned for the results from this month’s Feedback slip to see if there will be an art program revival	

LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. “Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work.” Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Assistance with legal research for everyone, and preparing for disciplinary and parole hearings *only* for people in Massachusetts. Hotline (9am-5pm EST): 617-495-3127
By mail: Prison Legal Assistance Project, 6 Everett Street, Suite 5107, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA 02138

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to: Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.
Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010